1: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Seri NU31

481 Examples of Seri fleetness and endurance might be multiplied indefinitely, and many of still more striking character might be adduced; but these instances, all attested by several witnesses, all corroborated by independent facts, and all consistent with the observations of the 1894 expedition, seem fairly to represent one aspect of the pedestrian habit of the tribe.

412 A trait of the Seri hardly less conspicuous than their pedestrian habit is habitual use of hands and teeth in lieu of the implements characteristic of even the lowly culture found among most primitive tribes. Perhaps the most nearly universal implement is the knife—at first of shell, tooth, bone, or wood, later of stone, and last of metal—and hardly a primitive tribe known from direct observation or from relics has been found independent of this most serviceable implement; yet the Seri may be described with reasonable accuracy as a knifeless folk. Awls and marlinspikes of bone and wood, shell cups, and protolithic mullers or hammers are found in numbers in their hands, on [172] their rancheria sites, and in their ancient shell accumulations, while rudely chipped stone arrowp ints are sparsely scattered over their range; yet not a single knife of stone or other wrought substance has [439] been found in their territory or in their possession, save for an occasional metal knife obtained by theft or barter. And the habit of dispensing with this primary implement is attested both by everyday customs and by the traditions and chronicles concerning the tribe. Thus, various observers (notably Hardy) have recorded the features and uses of balsas, harpoons, ollas, etc, yet no records of cutting implements have been found; similarly the chronicles contain records of [439] barter between the Seri and the Sonorenses through which the savages acquired aguardiente, manta, garments, sugar, grain, etc, yet no record is known of the leading articles of exchange to practically all other tribes of the continent, viz, cutlery; and in like manner the local traditions recount the constant desire of the Seri for liquor and tobacco, saccharine and other food substances, clothing or material for making it, tin cups, lard-cans, and other metallic utensils, as well as nails for harpoons and hoop-iron for arrowpoints, in addition to firearms and ammunition; yet the recounters are significantly silent on the subject of knives.

Conformably, the 60 Seri gathered near Costa Rica in 1894 made it their business to pick up or beg all sorts of industrial products and materials, yet apparently did not possess so many as a dozen knives in the entire band; and while protolithic implements, ollas, shell cups, paint-stones, etc., were seen in constant use, none of the men, women, or children were observed to use knives for cutting meat or for any other customary purpose. Among the supplies laid on top of the ● 264 jacal shown in plate X, to keep them out of the way of the dogs, was a hind leg of a horse, from femur to hoof (some three days dead and still

1: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Seri NU31

ripening); most of the larger muscles were already gnawed away, leaving loose ends of fiber and strings of tendon clinging to the bone, the condition being such that the remaining flesh might easily have been cut and scraped away by means of a knife; yet whenever a warrior or woman or youth hungered he or she took down the heavy joint, squatted or sat on the ground with back to one side of the doorway, held the mass at the height of the mouth, and gnawed, sucked, and swallowed, frequently tearing the tissue by twisting and backward jerks of the head, and not only masticating, but swallowing the free ends of tendons still attached to the bone. This process was varied only by seizing with the hands and tearing off a strip of flesh or skin already loosened by the teeth; and it was continued until the bones were practically clean, when they were wrenched apart by the stronger men in order that the cartilaginous cushions and epiphyses might be gnawed away. The only approach to cooking or carving was a parboiling of the foot, after the leg was wrenched off at the hock, until the hoof was sufficiently softened to be knocked off with the protolithic hupf[1] shown in plate XLIII, when half a dozen matrons and well-grown maidens gathered about to gnaw the gelatinous tissue (already softened by incipient decay as well as by the parboiling) investing the coffin bone. The entire procedure in this as in many other cases proclaimed the absence of knife-sense. The Caucasian huntsman does not have to think of his knife when game is to be bled or skinned or dissected; his habit-trained hand knows where to find the implement, how to seize it, and in most cases how to wield it advantageously; but the Seri hand possesses no such cunning, and uses the knife only clumsily and at second thought, if at all. The Seri huntsman, on the other hand, does not have to think of nails and teeth, for they are trained and coordinated by hereditary habit to spontaneously act in unison and with the utmost possible or needful vigor; while the Caucasian at least has completely lost the claw-and-teeth instinct of offense and defense.

Conformably with their striking independence of knives, the Seri are conspicuously unskilful in all mechanical operations involving the use of tools. Their most elaborate manufacture is the balsa, made from reeds broken at the butts and with the leaves and tops removed by the hands or by fire, bound together with hand-made cords; next in elaborateness come the bow and arrow, normally made without cutting tools; then follows their fictile ware, which is made wholly by hand, without aid of the simple molds and paddles and other devices used by neighboring tribes; while their primitive fabrics were apparently of hand-extracted fibers, twisted and woven wholly by hand, with the aid of wood or bone perforators in sewing and possibly in weaving. Practically the Seri possess but a single tool, and this is applied to a peculiarly wide variety of purposes—it is the originally natural cobble used for crushing bones and severing tendons, for grinding seeds and

[1] Defined postea, p. 188.

1: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Seri NU31

the turtle is either drowned or driven ashore, or else lifted on the craft.[1] Immediately on landing the quarry, the plastron is broken loose by blows of the hupf[2] and torn off by vigorous wrenches of the warriors and their strong-taloned spouses in the impetuous fury of a fierce blood-craze like that of carnivorous beasts; the blood and entrails and all soft parts are at once devoured, and the firmer flesh follows at a rate depending on the antecedent hunger, both men and women crushing integument and tendon and bone with the hupf, tearing other tissues with teeth and nails, mouthing shreds from the shells, and gorging the whole ravenously if well ahungered, but stopping to singe and smoke or even half roast the larger pieces if nearer satiety. If the quarry is too large for immediate consumption and not too far from a rancheria the remnants (including head and flippers and shells) are hoisted to the top of the jacal immediately over the open end—the conventional Seri larder—to soften in the sun for hours or days: and on these tough and gamey tidbits the home-stayers, especially the youths, chew luxuriously whenever other occupations fail. In times of plenty, such sun-ripened fragments of reeking feasts are rather generally appropriated first to the children and afterward to the coyote-dogs; and it is a favorite pastime of the toddlers to gather about an inverted carapace on hands and knees, crowding their heads into its noisome depths, displacing the rare scavenger beetles and blowflies of this arid province, mumbling at the cartilaginous processes, and sucking and swallowing again and again the tendonous strings from the muscular attachments, until, overcome by fulness and rank effluvia, they fall asleep with their heads in the trough—to be stealthily nudged aside by the cringing curs attached to the rancheria. Com-

[1] A lively and explicit account of Seri turtle-fishing appears in Hardy's Travels in the Interior of Mexico, 1829, pp. 395-397: "Jesús's bay is of considerable extent, and there are from five to three fathoms water close to Arnold's island, in the neighborhood of which the Indians catch abundance of turtle in a singular manner. I have already described their canoes, which in Spanish are called 'balsas'. An Indian paddles himself from the shore on one of these by means of a long, elastic pole of about 12 or 14 feet in length, the wood of which is the root of a tree (*Olneya tesota*), growing near the coast; and although the branches of this tree are extremely brittle, the underground roots are as pliable as whalebone and nearly as dark in color. At one end of this pole there is a hole an inch deep, into which is inserted another bit of wood, in shape like an arrow, having a square bit of iron 9 inches long fastened to it, the other end of the iron being pointed. Both the bolt and iron are first moistened and then tightly inserted one within the other. Fastened to the iron is a cord of very considerable length, which is brought up along the pole, and both are held in the left hand of the Indian. So securely is the cord thus fixed to the pole that although the latter is used as a paddle it does not fall out.

"A turtle is a very lethargic animal, and may frequently be surprised in its watery slumbers. The balsa is placed nearly perpendicularly over one of these unsuspecting sleepers, when the fisherman, softly sliding the pole through the water in the direction of the animal till within a foot or two of it, he suddenly plunges the iron into its back. No sooner does the creature feel itself wounded than it swims hastily forward and endeavors to liberate itself. The slightest motion of the turtle displaces the iron point from the long pole, which would otherwise be inevitably broken and the turtle would as certainly be lost; but in the manner here described it is held by the cord fastened on to the iron which has penetrated its back till, after it has sufficiently exhausted its strength, it is hoisted on board the canoe by the fisherman, who proceeds to the shore in order to dispose of his prize."

[2] The universal stone implement of the Seri, improvised from a subdiscoous and used in nearly every industrial occupation (see portion, p. 225); the designation is mimetic, or onomatopoetic, from the sound of the stroke, particularly on animal tissue.

1: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Seri NU31

224 While by far the larger share of Seri sustenance is drawn from the sea, a not inconsiderable portion is derived from the land; for the warriors and striplings and even the women are more skilful hunters than fishers.

The larger objects of the feral chase are deer of two or three species (the bura, or mule-deer, being most conspicuous and easiest taken), antelope, and mountain sheep; to which the puma, the jaguar, and perhaps two or three other carnivores might be added. The conventional method of taking the bura and other deer is a combination of stalking and coursing, usually conducted by five of the younger warriors, though three or four may serve in emergency; any excess over five being regarded as superfluous, or as a confession of inferiority. The chase is conducted in a distinctly ceremonial and probably ritualistic fashion, even when the finding of the game is casual, or incidental to a journey: at sight of the quarry, the five huntsmen scatter stealthily in such manner as partially to surround it; when it takes fright one after the other strives to show himself above the shrubbery or dunes in order to break its line of flight into a series of zigzags; and whether successful in this effort or not they keep approximate pace with it until it tires, then gradually surround it, and finally rush in to either seize it in their hands or cripple it with clubs—though the latter procedure is deemed undignified, if not wrong, and hardly less disreputable than complete failure. When practicable the course is laid toward the rancheria or camp; and in any event the ideal finish is to bring the animal alive into the family group, where it may be dissected by the women, and where the weaklings may receive due share of the much-prized blood and entrails. The dissection is merely a ravenous 264 rending of skin and flesh, primarily with the teeth (perhaps after oblique bruising or tearing by blows with the hupf over strongly flexed joints), largely with hands and fingers aided anon by a foot planted on the carcass, and partly with some improvised device, such as a horn or tooth of the victim itself, the serrated edge of a shell-cup, or perhaps a sharp-edged cane-splint from a broken arrow carried for emergency's sake. Commonly the entire animal, save skin and harder bones, is gulped at a sitting in which the zeal of the devotee and the frenzy of the carnivore blend; but in case the group is small and the quarry large, the sitting is extended by naps or prolonged slumberings, and [252] the more energetic squaws may even trouble to kindle a fire and partially cook the larger joints, thereby inciting pulled appetite to new efforts. Finally the leg bones are split for the marrow and their ends [239] preserved for awls; the horns are retained by the successful huntsmen as talisman-trophies; while the skin is stretched in the desert sun, [281] scratched and gnawed free of superfluous tissue, rubbed into partial 224 pliability, and kept for bedding or robe or kilt.

957 The chase of the hare is closely parallel to that of the deer save that it is conducted by striplings, who thereby serve apprenticeship in hunt-

1: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Seri NU31

ing and at the same time enrich the tribal larder with a game beneath the dignity of the warriors; while still smaller boys similarly chase the rabbit, which is commonly scorned by the striplings. The conventional hare-hunting party is three, and it is deemed disreputable to increase this number greatly. The youths spread at sight of the game and seek to surround it, taking ingenious and constant advantage of the habit of the hare to run obliquely or in zigzags to survey more readily the source of its fright; for some time they startle it but slightly by successive appearances at a distance, but gradually increase its harassment until it bounds hither and thither in terror, when they rapidly close in and seize it, the entire chase commonly lasting but a few minutes. The quarry is customarily taken alive to camp, where it is quickly rent to fragments and the entrails and flesh and most of the bones consumed; the skin usually passes into possession of a matron for use as infantile clothing or cradle bedding, while the ears are kept by the youth who first seized the game until his feat is eclipsed by some other event—unless chance hunger sooner tempts him to transmute his trophy into pottage. 224 857 [264] [281]

While the collective, semiceremonial style of chase alone is thoroughly good form in Seri custom, it is often rendered impracticable by the scattering of the tribe in separate families or small bands, in which case the hare and its associates, like the larger carnivores customarily, are taken by strategy rather than by strength. This form of chase is largely individual; in it archery plays a leading rôle; and in it, too, ambuscade, stealthy lying in wait, and covert assault attain high development. It is closely analogous with the warfare typical of the tribe; and it is especially noteworthy as one of the most effective stimuli to intellectual activity, and hence to the development of invention—if the term may be applied to industrial products so lowly as those of the Seri. 224 [361]

The chief artifact produced by the strategic chase on land would seem to be the analogue of the harpoon used at sea, i. e., the arrow. This weapon is one of the three or four most highly differentiated and thoroughly perfected of the Seri artifacts, ranking with canteen-olla and balsa, and perhaps outranking the turtle-harpoon. It is fabricated with great care and high skill, and with striking uniformity in details of material and construction. A typical example is 25 inches in length and consists of three pieces—point, foreshaft, and main shaft (feathered toward the nock). The foreshaft is 8¼ inches long, of hard wood carefully ground by rubbing with quartzite or pumice into cylindrical form, about three-eighths of an inch in diameter at the larger end and tapering slightly toward the point; the larger end is extended by careful grinding into a tang which is fitted into the main shaft, the joint being neatly wrapped with sinew. This main shaft is a cane-stalk (*Phragmites communis*?) 15 or 16 inches long, carefully selected for size and well straightened and smoothed; it is feathered with three equidistantly- 411

I: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Seri NU31

224 [225] hides its travail and suckling in the wilderness, and perhaps the deified pelican.[1]

Parallel to the chase of the larger land game is the hunting of horses and other imported stock; for the animals are regarded in no other light than that of easy quarry. The horses of the Seri frontier, like those of wild ranges generally, are strongly gregarious, and the herds are well regimented under recognized leaders, so that the chase of their kind is necessarily collective on the part of both hunters and game; and the favorite method is for a considerable group of either warriors or women to surround the entire herd, or a band cut out from it, "mill" them (i. e., set them running in a gradually contracting circle) and occasionally dash on an animal, promising by reason of exceptional fatness or gravidness. The warrior's customary clutch is by the mane or foretop with one hand and the muzzle with the other, with his weight thrown largely on the neck, when a quick wrench throws the animal, and, if all goes well, breaks its neck;[2] while the huntress commonly aims to stun the animal with a blow from her hupf. In either case the disposition of the carcass is similar to that of other large quarry, save that thought is given to the danger of ensuing attack by vaqueros; so that it is customary to consume at once only the blood and pluck, and if time permits the paunch and intestines with their contents, and then to rend the remainder into quarters, which warriors or even women shoulder and rush toward their stronghold. Burros (which, next to the green turtle, afford the favorite Seri food) and horned cattle are commonly stalked and slain, or, at least, wounded with arrows, so that it is commonly the stragglers that are picked off; though sometimes several animals are either milled or rushed, and thrown by a

224 ● 264

[1] A single incident expressing the first sentiment toward travelling animals must be noted: a few minutes after the group shown in plate XI was photographed, a starveling cur—a female apparently of nearly pure coyote blood and wild's a week of term—drank toward the broken olla-bottle in the left center of the picture, in which a rank horse-foot was simmering; the woman bending over the bottle suddenly straightened and shot out her foot with such force and directness that the cur was lifted entirely over the corner of the nearest jacal, and the poor beast fell stunned and moaning, a prematurely born pup protruding from her two-thirds of its length. The sound of the stroke and fall attracted attention throughout the group; the women smiled and granted approval of the well-aimed kick, and a dozen children gathered to continue the assault. Partially recovering, the cur struggled to its feet and started for the chaparral, followed by the jeering throng; at first the chase seemed sportive only, but suddenly one of the smaller boys (the third from the left in the group shown in plate XVI) took on a new aspect—his figure stiffened, his jaws set, his eyes shot purple and green, and he plunged into the lead, and just before the hurried beast reached cover he seized the protruding embryo, jerked it away, and ran off in triumph. Three minutes afterward he was seen in the shelter of a jacal greedily gorging his spoil in successive bites, just as the Caucasian boy devours a peeled banana. Meanwhile, two or three males who had struck his tail stood around begging bites and sucking at chance blood spatters on teeth, skin, or tattered rags; and as the victor came forth later, licking his chops, he was met by half jocular but admiring plaudits for his prowess from the dozen matrons lounging about the neighboring jacales. Parallel instances, both observed and gathered at second hand, might be added in numbers; but this may suffice as the sole specific basis for the generalization which places the Seri below the plane of possible cannibalism—a generalization so broad as to demand some record of data which it would be more agreeable to ignore.

[2] This warrior's clutch, and the notion that it is discreditable if not criminal for the masculine adult to take recourse to weapons in hand-to-hand slaughter, are strongly suggestive of numerous motives and of studied mimicry of the larger carnivores, such as the jaguar—the "neck-twister" of the Maya.

1: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Seri NU31

earlier paragraphs (pp. 164–169); these symbols evidently represent an exclusively maternal organization into clans consecrated to zoic tutelaries. The tutelaries, or totems, together with the clan names and all personal designations connected with the totems, are highly esoteric, and were not ascertained save in the few cases mentioned above.[1]

It should be observed that the identification of kindred by the alien observer is difficult and somewhat uncertain, since the relationships recognized in Seri socialry are not equivalent to those customary among Caucasians. It was found especially difficult to identify the husband of the jacal, partly because he is commonly incongruously younger (and hence relatively smaller) than the mistress, and partly because of the undignified position of outer guard into which he is forced by the tribal etiquette. Moreover, his connection with the house is veiled by the absence of authority over both children and domestic affairs, though he exercises such authority freely (within the customary limits) in the jacales of his female relatives. There is, indeed, some question as to the clear recognition of paternity; certainly the females have no term for "my father", i. e., the term is the same as that for "my mother", *em*, though the males distinguish the maternal ancestor by a suffixed syllable (*e*="my father"; *e-ta* or *i'-tah*="my mother"), which seems to be a magnificative or an intensificative element. It is noteworthy that the kinship terminology is strikingly meager; also that while the records suggest various significant points, the material is hardly rich enough to warrant complete synthesis of the consanguineal system.

While the burden of the more permanent property pertains to the women, there is a decided differentiation of labor with a concomitant vesting of certain property in the warriors—the distinctively masculine chattels comprising arrows, quivers, bows, turtle-harpoons, etc. There are indications that the balsas, too, are regarded as masculine property. The impermanent possessions—water, food, etc—seem to be the common property of men, women, and children, except in so far as the right is regulated by regimentation; for the privileges of eating and drinking are enjoyed in the order of seniority. In the reckoning of seniority, the chief (who is comonly such in virtue of his position as nominal elder brother of a prolific dame) ranks first, and is followed by other warriors in an order affected in an undetermined way by conjugal relations as well as by their prowess or sagacity (the equivalents of age in primitive philosophy) down to an undetermined point—apparently fixed by puberty; then comes the clanmother, followed by her daughters in the order of nominal age, which is affected by the status of spouses and the number of living offspring; finally come the children, practically in the order of their strength (which also is deemed an equivalent of age), though the girls—especially those

[1] The chief object of the 1895 expedition was to pursue the inquiries concerning social organization, totems, etc; but, as mentioned elsewhere, this object was defeated by the troublous history of the tribe during the earlier part of 1895, and the consequent revival and intensification of their animosity toward aliens.

3:Davis & Downum E-6 (1923-1949) 1945
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225 through the shell. The foreshaft was jerked out at the first movement of the animal which was held by the fisherman's line until tired, after which it was either driven ashore or lifted onto the balsa.

No sooner was the quarry landed than the soft undershell was crushed and broken loose with a cobblestone "hupf," and then torn off
● 264 by the tribespeople with the impetuous fury of blood-crazed carnivorous beasts. The entrails and soft, bloody gore were first consumed, followed, depending upon the proximity of the last meal, by the firmer flesh, all but the infants of the household pounding, tearing and chewing their raw, grisly
[252] chunks, stopping to singe or half roast larger pieces only if near satiety. If immediate consumption of the prey was not accomplished, the remnants were carried to the rancheria and there lifted to the top of the jacal to soften in the sun. The reeking carapace was often left indefinitely beside the

[197]

Photo by J. B. Harrison

FIG. 9. PITAHAYA AND SAGUESO CACTI PROVIDE A RICH HARVEST OF FRUITS IN SUMMER.

[p. 199(A)]

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302
291
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FIG. 10. SERI BELLE
WEARING A PAINTED BERRIN SUCH AS FORMERLY WAS INDICATIVE OF THE BLOOD LINE OF A GIVEN CLAN.

264 hut, the rotting flesh and cartilage of its noisome interior to be explored and mouthed by the toddling children or gnawed by the cringing coyote-curs attached to the rancheria.

223 At certain seasons or when deemed propitious by the elders of the family, a pelican harvest was planned. Isla Tasne, some fifteen miles from Tiburon Island, is the haunt and breeding ground of the pelican that served not only as a valuable food supply for the Seris, but also as the chief source of apparel. At such seasons temporary rancherias were set up on the shores of Bahia Kino, and when conditions were favorable, or when hunger prompted them, the balsas [502] would be launched in the evening toward Isla Tasne, the women of the party lying prone on the cane bundles and propelling the craft by paddling with their hands or with large hatchet clam shells. Reaching the island after dark, the balsas were left in charge of the women while the men and older boys, armed with clubs, crept up over the slippery, guano-covered rocks to rush on the roosting fowls and slaughter them. The [264]

[p. 179(B)]

3:Davis & Dawson E-5 (1922-1940) 1945
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[301]
[302]
[386]
[516]

FIG. 11. PAINTING THE FACE
USING A RED PIGMENT OBTAINED FROM THE TOROTE.

223 lice-infested carcasses were then gathered
264 and brought to a central place among the stinking rocks where a gluttonous feast was held in the dark, the long ahungered tribesmen gorging themselves with the soft entrails and succulent parts, and carousing in the carnage until overcome by slumber.

281 The day following the slaughter, the
294 matrons collected the carcasses with least damaged plumage and carefully removed the skins, which were then gnawed and sucked clean of flesh and grease and dried in the sun (Fig. 8). From two or more of these skins they made a kilt or robe (Figs. 1, 2), the principal apparel, not so much for protection from cold as from the scratch and prick of the abounding spines and thorns of Seriland. The skins were sewed with sinew and often held in place on the body by a
283 cord made of human hair (Fig. 1). The
302 culture of their long, luxuriant hair, indeed, was an important matter. They brushed their hair regularly with a brush fashioned

[p. 200(A)]

000 wear ceremonial feathers as did our western Indians. I saw no skin or
164 cutaneous disease, or evidence of tuberculosis or of trachoma---the curse of our Indians.

142 One boy-child of five years was a handsome child---fat, round,
302 sturdy, with roving great black eyes, large thick lips, a picture of
[241] perfect health. He was almost naked. His hair was done in a pigtail
[83] with a red string braided into it. His face like all the others was dirty, but he waded into the shallow water with a short spear and I saw him catch two crabs with his little harpoon. The water did not bother his face.

415 They had no plates or eating tools, except large deep clam shells,
412 cast up by the sea, which served as cups and dippers. Their long, keen
• 364 belt knives were used for cutting, carving or skinning, and always the
[258] fingers for eating. They gathered in a circle around an olla of seeds of long grass growing on the sea bottom prepared by winnowing, parching and grinding, and then cooked with turtle oil. Each one dipped his or her fingers into the olla and conveyed them to the mouth without losing a drop, and licked them off with great relish.

231 The dogs eat with the family. There were six or seven half-starved
264 ones. If someone picked up a piece of turtle flipper the dog often took the first lick at it, bit off a piece or licked it before it reached the owner's mouth. The dogs were not punished. They were just slapped to keep them out of the pots.

123 We had a great time that evening in Seriland. The young man played
534 his violin. This consisted of a hollow box cut out of a *palo verde*
[224] tree, and a piece of pine about sixteen inches long; terminating in a
[228] hollow where a single peg was fitted. The one string was twisted deer
[237] sinew, and the bridge was a small round clam shell at the far end. The
[533] bow was a small bent stick and some black horsehair. On the handle was a wad of rosin fastened underneath. By fingering this string a few weak squeaky notes were made, and this was the classical music of the Seris.

Manuel Encina seized his gourd rattle and began chanting. Herrera tapped a tin can and I beat on an inverted basket and the orchestra
535 was in full swing. A young girl, Rosa, dragged out a turtle shell and
123 standing on it began to dance. This dance consisted of stepping up and down quickly with each foot alternately, and this stamping, barefooted, emitted a hollow sound. Every once in a while I let out an
[124] Indian yell which pleased the Seris very much. For two hours they had a real swell time. We took one flashlight of the proceeding.

[342] Each family was in their hut, which afforded very slight shelter
[343] as they were only partially roofed over and the sides were broken
[339] down in places. The huts were all adjoining and each had a little
[341] campfire, which did not give much illumination, so the dancing was in semi-darkness.

[text continues on p. 163]

123 the flesh attached. This we roasted, or broiled, by standing it on
262 edge against two stakes in front of the fire. The breast was white and tender, somewhat like roast pig, but much more delicious.

262 The Seris cut off the great flippers, dug out the entrails, and
252 whenever there was a crack in the crowd of men, women and children, there was a dog lapping the blood and chewing a shred of meat before being driven off. Men, women and children tore off pieces of the tender
[251] meat and ate it raw. The blood which gathered in the hollow of the shell was baled out and saved in an olla.

A woman took out the coils of entrails, ripped them open with her finger, squeezed out the half-digested sea grass, which resembled closely-packed boiled greens, and rinsed them in the sea. The head
[251] was skillfully disjointed, and with flippers, entrails and liver, put up on the brush roof away from the sand and dogs.

Then began the feast; half the turtle being devoured immediately.
[264] To see Blanco, which name fits neither his complexion or character, gnaw the bone and tear away the raw flesh of a turtle flipper with his strong white teeth and cruel mouth, would not require much imagination to substitute the shin bone of a human being.

All parts of the sea turtle are utilized except the bones and portions of the head. The white, flexible under-shell is roasted and eaten, but how they can masticate and digest it is a mystery. I tried it and gave it up, as did all our party. It might have been a Goodyear tire, for all the impression we made on it, but even the Seri children
237 eat it. The carapace is broken into small pieces and dried out in an olla, and this yields a green oil. The shell is nearly one-half inch thick and filled with minute cells which carry oil. This oil is evidently a provision of nature to prevent barnacles and marine growths from attaching to the shell. This oil is poured into a previously cleaned section of intestine, fastened at one end, and then is bottled, ready for transportation or use.

The skin of the flippers is used for sandals. The broken pieces of carapace are also used for firing ollas. The shells are used for windbreaks, for receptacles for transporting household things on women's heads, and possibly for other needs. The stomachs are stretched, probably with sand, and when dried are used for transporting water, the same as we use a canteen.

185 The Seris are always improvident. They raise no cattle. They plant
261 nothing and the only crops they raise are children and dogs. They store no food away, eat when there is plenty, go hungry when there is
[241] nothing to eat. When they will eat raw turtle meat like animals, their
[231] taste is not refined. This is evidenced when they will eat a horse or
[262] burro dead, several days---scrape off the maggots to get a chance at it.

123 was black. He then ground it in the frying pan by rolling it with a tin can. When made, the coffee was black and bitter, but they were used to it that way.

At three thirty in the morning we were up from our sand beds and drank coffee. At four we pushed off, towing our *balsa* on which we lashed our turtle shells, antlers and other things. Our boat rode the waves like a duck.

As we glided by the foot of some mountains we could hear the surf break sullenly. We had the sail up but soon had to resort to the oars as the slight wind died out. Day soon began to grow light. The sea was glassy, reflecting the rosy morning tinge. There was a swell on but the waves were smooth.

136 The cormorants, in threes and fives, began flying to their feeding grounds with swift wings and necks outstretched. Then a few Pelicans drifted idly by on lazy wings. A school of sardines fretted the water near us, chased by a hungry fish from its depths. A few porpoises rose and dived, rose and dived, rose and dived, time after time. At one time eight of them came within twenty feet of us and one dived right under our bow, bouncing the boat up and down.

133 Soon we were passing some red volcanic hills, with caves and blow
123 holes in the cliff and sea caves below, in which the sea roared. Giant cactus secured a precarious footing in the crannies of the cliffs. Then a long beach, then *Cerro Prieto*, another red cliff descending to the sea, penetrated with numerous caves and roosting places for cormorants.

123 As we neared Alcatraz *(Pelican)* Island, we saw a fishing boat in the distance. The wind had freshened and was ahead and the waves seemed almost to come in board, but the hollowed tree arose and rarely shipped any water. A boat put off from the fishing boat and was rowed to shore, and as we came up we hailed the crew and grounded our own boat. They had seen us from Alcatraz Hill, and seeing the balsa thought the Seri Indians had stolen a fishing boat and were towing their own boat. Each man had a belt of cartridges and if the Seris had been there instead of us they were going to kill them. Bob knew them from Guaymas.

We pushed off from shore again, and after rowing a half or three quarters of a mile further we beached our boats, cooked dinner and waited for our auto truck. Our provisions were almost gone. We had only enough for one meal left. No meat at all. Water was almost gone. None other for miles.

415 One of the cherished vessels used by the Seris is an agate chamber
• 264 pot. It is black from much use. When I saw it, it contained a green
262 slimy mess made from meal of seaweed seeds and the green fat or oil of the turtle. The Seris stick their fingers into the pot and then lick them off. If any is left the dog licks out the pot. No vessel is ever washed; it is licked clean.

123 Then Chico Romero and his load of children and dogs arrived and
484 he unloaded his impediments on the beach, and soon the women came walking along the beach and joined the party. The boats carrying the heavy things and children; the women, with their babies and a few light things on their heads, walk along the beach when possible and follow the boats, which hug the shore to avoid the strong currents and tide. The boats are propelled by paddles mostly, though some of the Indians use oars. The women are slightly built, slender and in-
501 clined to be gaunt, owing to the hard life and lack of food. Their
142 cheek bones are quite prominent and their profiles present protruding lips.

422 Having no permanent homes, moving hither and thither for their
[364] various food supply, household things are not accumulated and life is reduced to its very simplest elements and absolute necessities.

Crude baskets made from shoots of the torote tree, vessels in which to cook, and some patched rags in place of Pelican skins to serve as blankets to the fortunate few, constitute the family pos-
231 sessions. Strange to relate, many of the women have an over-supply of
[853] milk, and according to Roberto have puppies nurse what the babies cannot take. One woman was known to nurse a baby pig on one side and a puppy on the other.

[264] Family dogs lick all cooking vessels which is unnecessary as they
[894] are thoroughly clean when the Seris are through with them, and also lick the infants clean after performing their natural functions, so they are quite indispensable. I saw a Seri girl place on the sand a small can of water for a dog and then saw her drink some of the remainder and pour the rest back in a five-gallon can. Dogs frequently swim across the Infernillo to join their masters.

732 Asked about cripples and incompetents, Roberto said they probably did not exist. The conditions of survival were too precarious to admit of anyone living who was unable, by physical disability, to hunt or fish. There are two or three men who are nearly blind or so. The wives of these men eke an uncertain living for them by the hardest
262 struggle. The sea turtle is the staple; one man and one good boat can
433 secure a living for five families. There are now nine boats, but one
501 boat to a family would practically free them from continual want.
262 With the exception of four bones in the flippers and the bones of the
237 head, all the sea turtle is used---the meat, blood, entrails, shell which furnishes food and oil, skin of flippers which furnishes sandals, sinew for strings. Nothing is wasted except contents of the entrails.

123 Again, we laid our blankets on the clean white sand of the shore and were lulled to rest by the murmuring sea.

123 Daylight found us up the next morning, and we breakfasted, rolled
484 up our blankets, pushed the boats into the sea and were off by the time the sun rose over the mountains and shone over a glassy sea. Two Seris towed their boat by a tump line, while a boy of twelve steered